

INSTRUCTIONField Trips

So as to provide for the adequate planning, scheduling, and supervision of field trips, as well as to facilitate the timely review of field trip requests, the following procedures and requirements are established:

I. Procedure

A. Staff members are to submit all field trip requests to the building principal for initial consideration. Such requests are to be submitted in triplicate upon the appropriate form. All information elicited is to be provided.

B. The principal shall consider the field trip request taking into account board policy and regulation, the timeliness of the request, the merits of the trip proposed, and the completeness of the form submitted. If approved, the principal shall forward the request to the Coordinator of Administrative Services, or such other individual as is designated by the Superintendent. Unusual field trip requests shall be submitted to the Coordinator of Administrative Services not less than 45 school days prior to the anticipated date of departure. Other field trip requests shall be submitted not less than 15 days prior to the departure date.

C. The Coordinator of Administrative Services shall consider the request as submitted. If approved, and provided that the submission requests transportation via board owned vehicle, the Coordinator of Administrative Services shall forward the request to the Director of Pupil Transportation for his consideration and action. If disapproved, or, if approved and the submission does not request transportation via board owned vehicle, the Coordinator of Administrative Services shall return the form to the originating staff member via the principal. A request for an unusual field trip which is approved by the Coordinator of Administrative Services shall be forwarded to the school board for further consideration when appropriate.

D. The Director of Pupil Transportation shall consider the request to provide transportation taking into account such factors as the availability of drivers, availability of buses or other vehicles, destination, distance, safety, timeliness of request, and such other

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factors as the Director deems appropriate. The Director shall return to the originating staff member, via the principal, the form submitted, indicating thereon whether the request is approved or disapproved.

E. Community Based Instruction (CBI) field trips shall require in addition to the procedures above being followed and met, the approval being obtained of the Supervisor of Special Education prior to submission to the Coordinator of Administrative Services.

II. Transportation

A. Transportation for student field trips may be by school bus, county vehicle, charter/commercial bus, train, commercial airline, or other public conveyance. Any agreement which the board may have entered into with any entity concerning provision of transportation services is to be honored by staff in making arrangements for transportation.

B. Board owned vehicles are not available for any trip exceeding a radius of 55 miles from the individual school. Field trips utilizing school buses are not to be scheduled for departure prior to 9:15 a.m., or for return after 1:30 p.m. on days when school is in session. This requirement may be waived by the Director of Pupil Transportation in special circumstances provided sufficient buses are available for the regular morning and afternoon runs. School buses are not available for use on any instructional or recreational field trip after May 31 of the current school year.

C. A certificate of insurance shall be obtained by the staff member requesting the field trip, or be on file with the principal or Director of Pupil Transportation, prior to that staff member submitting any field trip request which provides for transportation of any student in any vehicle or conveyance other than one which is owned by the school division.

D. Transportation of students may be by private vehicle, except for van, in circumstances where the principal has determined and maintained evidence on file at the school that:

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1. the driver of such vehicle is either a staff member who is on the approved driver's list, or is an adult chaperone who possesses a valid Virginia operator's license and has maintained a safe driving record without conviction of any moving violation including that for DUI, reckless driving, and/or speeding;
2. the vehicle to be utilized displays a current state inspection sticker; is insured in the minimum amount of \$25,000 per person/\$50,000 per occurrence/\$20,000 property as is evidenced by a certificate of insurance issued by a carrier authorized to do business in Virginia; and, is equipped with a seat belt for each person who is to be transported;
3. the student group to be transported does not exceed 15 in number and it is not economically reasonable to transport such group by commercial carrier;
4. the field trip activity is either related to the educational curriculum, is sponsored by the VHSL, the Virginia Department of Education, an approved national or state organization, or involves participation at a sanctioned state/national convention or competition; and
5. full disclosure has been made to the parents of each student concerning the trip, its costs, the mode of transportation, liability of drivers, etc.; and the consent of the parents has been obtained for the student to participate.

When forwarding such a field trip request to the Coordinator of Administrative Services for approval, the principal need not submit the evidence which he/she has gathered concerning fulfillment of the above criteria. The principal need only indicate on the request that he/she has determined that the above requirements have been satisfied.

E. The number of persons to be transported in any vehicle shall not exceed the legal seating capacity.

III. Supervision

A. At least one licensed staff member shall accompany each field trip. In addition to the staff member there shall be required the presence and supervision of adult

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chaperones in order that the following ratios of students to teachers are not exceeded:

K-5 in addition to the licensed staff member, at least 1 chaperone per 10 students.

6-8 in addition to the licensed staff member, at least 1 chaperone per 15 students.

9-12 in addition to the licensed staff member, at least 1 chaperone per 15 students.

Athletic Teams/Band including the coach and band teacher, at least 1 chaperone per 20 students.

B. In the case of overnight field trips, chaperones are to be of the appropriate gender.

C. No one other than the bus drivers, teachers, licensed staff members, chaperones, and students are to participate in the field trip except with the express consent of the principal. At least one staff member or adult chaperone is to be present in each vehicle. When numbers permit, a staff member is to be present in each vehicle.

IV. Rules of General Application

1. A local trip is one which is a radius of 25 miles or less in distance from the school.

2. A non-local trip is one which is of a radius greater than 25 miles in distance from the school. School buses may be used for trips less than 55 miles.

3. All students K-5 should have the opportunity to experience at least one educational field trip per year.

4. At the middle school and secondary school level, the number of local field trips shall not exceed one trip per semester, or two per year, for each course subject. Non-local trips shall not exceed one per year per course subject.

5. As to all field trips, grades K-12 are responsible for paying the cost of the school bus driver.

6. Field trips for gifted and talented students, teams, and for school club activities shall be an extension of that particular organization's function in the school. Such field trips are not to be recreational in nature.

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7. Recreational trips must be approved by the principal and must be by charter bus, school bus, or other board owned vehicle. The rate for board owned vehicles shall be that established by the board. All such trips shall be scheduled outside regular school hours and preferably on the weekend.
 8. Every effort is to be made to avoid scheduling field trips which conclude late on a night which is followed by a school day.
 9. It is suggested that a first aid kit be taken on all field trips. Any minor injury or accident is to be reported both to the principal and to the parent upon return to school. Any injury or accident of a serious nature is to be reported promptly to the principal and/or parent.
 10. All vehicles are to depart from and return to the school site. No person is to be picked up or discharged at any other location unless specifically authorized in advance by the principal.
 11. Trip particulars, such as return time, shall be discussed by the principal, teacher, chaperone, and driver prior to departure. In the event that circumstances warrant an earlier return, the bus driver shall set the time.
 12. Field trip groups are to arrive at all destinations at the appointed time and return to school punctually.
 13. Buses and other vehicles are to be left clean.
 14. The bus driver shall determine safety related issues.
- V. Responsibilities of the Teacher
1. In planning a field trip, the teacher(s) should have a clear objective(s) of what the students will be able to explain, discuss or do as a result of the experience.
 2. Classroom instruction and activities which clearly relate to the objective(s) should precede and follow each field trip.
 3. It is the teacher's responsibility to plan each field trip, to make appropriate arrangements for the trip, and to have written travel directions and/or a map for the driver as to the location of the site. (If a tour guide is to be engaged, the guide should be

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informed as to the group's objectives, maturity level,
and frame of reference.)

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4. It is the teacher's responsibility to inform parents and guardians of the objectives of the field trip, scheduling, mode of transportation, and to secure written permission for each student's participation.
5. The teacher shall submit to the principal at the time of departure a complete and accurate list containing the names of all students and chaperones participating in the trip.
6. The teacher shall arrange to have an appropriate number of chaperones to escort and supervise the students. The teacher shall inform the chaperones as to the trip's objectives and schedule, and their responsibilities.
7. Each chaperone shall be informed precisely by the teacher as to the group of students that the chaperone is responsible for and shall be provided with a list of student names. The supervising adult of a group is to know where each student is at all times.
8. Teachers and chaperones are to accompany the students when they ride the bus, or any other conveyance.
9. The teacher is responsible for the discipline of the students.
10. It is suggested that the teacher plan educational activities, which the students can participate in during the ride. The activities are to be related to the objectives of the trip.
11. If for any reason the bus will be returning to the school after the regular bus run, the teacher shall notify the principal or assistant principal by telephone as soon as possible.

Editor's Note

See also school board policy #6-42.

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